Region 6

Applicant: Michigan Works! Berrien-Cass-Van Buren

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Partners: Michigan Works! Berrien-Cass-Van Buren

Counties Included: Berrien, Cass, Van Buren

Regional Highlights:

Region 6 includes three counties (Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren) in the southwest corner of the Lower Peninsula. This is a diverse area in terms of population, community composition and economic structure. The Berrien-Cass-Van Buren MWA will be the administrator of the 21st Century Workforce funding, and it will seize the opportunity to develop and implement some further coordination of the area's workforce development process.

Development Strategy

This region will engage a facilitator with a background in broad-based planning to coordinate the development of a more effective regional workforce development strategy. The MWA will utilize the members of its Board of Directors to form the initial workgroups. These partners already represent major employers, economic developers, educational institutions, community based groups, local officials and labor organizations from the area. The partnership will quickly expand to include additional key employers, industry groups, state agencies like MEDC and MRS, as well as other important training providers.

Resource Mapping

A system for unified, effective, and efficient contact with employers in the area will be developed based on the input and expertise of the partners because these individuals are already from the essential sectors and final targeted audiences. Productive contacts with employers will also require enhanced information about the area. Planning funds will be used to develop a resource map of services for education, re-training, job placement, relocation assistance, and entrepreneurship opportunities. A strategy to address the area's chronic need for adult literacy programs will also be developed as part of partners' assessments of the local area status.